

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete set of the claims, and replaces all earlier claims sets and versions thereof.

Claims 1-88 (canceled)

89. (Currently Amended): A method of providing active user feedback in a graphic user interface including an adjustable soft control able to change an attribute of an object over a continuous range of attribute values, said method comprising steps of:

detecting positioning of a pointing device over the soft control, said positioning designating the soft control;

displaying a window upon designation of the soft control;

displaying a representation of the object in the window; and

animating the displayed representation of the object to mimic an effect on the attribute of a nominal adjustment of the soft control, said animation being in the window as a training preview exemplifying the nature of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from adjustment of the soft control.

90. (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein the animating step mimics an effect on the attribute by varying a corresponding attribute of the displayed representation over a part of the range of attribute values.

91. (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein said preview window is superimposed on the display area of said graphic user interface.

92. (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein the representation of the object is a symbolic object whose shape is adapted to reflect a change in the value of said attribute corresponding to said nominal adjustment.

93. (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein said step of displaying a window is capable of being one of enabled and inhibited.

94. (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein:  
the method comprises a step of displaying a representation of the adjustable soft control; and:  
the animating step further comprises showing, in ghost form in the window, said nominal adjustment of the soft control corresponding to the animation of the displayed representation.

95. A method according to claim 89, wherein the preview window can be customized by defining user preferences.

96. A method according to claim 95, wherein the customization comprises at least one of:  
setting a nature of the changes, and

setting a range of the change.

97. A method according to claim 89, further comprising the step of coupling another soft control to said soft control, wherein the change implementable by the soft control is dependent upon a current setting of the other soft control.

98. (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium storing a computer program for providing active user feedback in a graphic user interface including an adjustable soft control able to change an attribute of an object over a continuous range of attribute values, said program comprising:

code for detecting positioning of a pointing device over the soft control, said positioning designating the soft control;

code for displaying a window upon designation of the soft control;

code for displaying a representation of the object in the window; and

code for animating the displayed representation of the object to mimic an effect on the attribute of a nominal adjustment of the soft control, said animation being presented in the window as a training preview exemplifying the nature of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from adjustment of the soft control.

99. (Currently Amended): A medium according to claim 98, wherein said code for animating mimics an effect on the attribute by varying a corresponding attribute of the displayed representation over a part of the range of attribute values.

100. (Currently Amended): A medium according to claim 98, wherein said preview window is superimposed on the display area of said graphic user interface.

101. (Currently Amended): A medium according to claim 98, wherein the representation of the object is a symbolic object whose shape is adapted to reflect a change in the value of said attribute corresponding to said nominal adjustment.

102. (Currently Amended): A medium according to claim 98, wherein the representation of the object is a literal representation of the object whose shape is adapted to reflect a change in the value of the attribute corresponding to said nominal adjustment.

103. (Currently Amended): A medium according to claim 98, wherein said step of displaying a window is capable of being one of enabled and inhibited.

104. (Currently Amended): A medium according to claim 98, further comprising:

code for displaying a representation fo the adjustable soft control;  
and wherein the code for the animating step further comprises:  
code for showing, in ghost form in the window, said nominal  
adjustment of the soft control corresponding to the animation of the displayed  
representation.

105. A medium according to claim 98, wherein the preview window can be customized by defining user preferences.

106. A medium according to claim 105, wherein the customization comprises at least one of:

setting a nature of the change; and

setting a range of the change.

107. A medium according to claim 98, further comprising the code for a coupling step for coupling another soft control to said soft control, wherein the change implementable by the soft control is dependent upon a current setting of the other soft control.

108. (Currently Amended): An apparatus for providing active user feedback in a graphic user interface including an adjustable soft control able to change an attribute of an object over a continuous range of attribute values, said apparatus comprising:

screen counter detection controller for controlling detecting positioning of a pointing device over the soft control, said positioning designating the soft control;

window display controller for controlling displaying a window upon designation of the soft control;

object representation display controller for controlling displaying a representation of the object in the window; and

display animation controller for controlling animating the displayed representation of the object to mimic an effect on the attribute of a nominal adjustment of the soft control, said animation being presented in the window as a training preview exemplifying the name of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from adjustment of the soft control.

109. A method according to claim 89, comprising the further steps of:

adjusting the soft control in a continuous temporal manner; and

animating the displayed representation of the object in response to the detecting step, said animation being presented in the window as a preview exemplifying the effect of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from said adjusting of the soft control.

110. A method according to claim 109, comprising the further steps of:

releasing the designation of the soft control; and

changing a display of the actual object in a display area of the graphical user interface in response to the releasing of the soft control.

111. A computer readable medium according to claim 98, further comprising:

code for adjusting the soft control in a continuous temporal manner;

and

code for animating the displayed representation of the object in response to the adjusting step, said animation being presented in the window as a preview exemplifying the effect of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from said adjusting of the soft control.

112. A computer readable medium according to claim 111, further comprising:

code for releasing the designation of the soft control; and  
code for changing a display of the actual object in a display area of the graphical user interface in response to the releasing of the soft control.

113. An apparatus according to claim 108, further comprising:  
designating release controller for controlling releasing the designation fo the soft control; and

object display controller for controlling changing a display of the actual object in a display area of the graphical user interface in response to the releasing of the soft control.

A redlined version of the foregoing set of pending claims is appended hereto.